



State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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June 24, 1996

TO: Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor
Tony Gallegos, Senior Reclamation Specialist

FROM: Lowell P. Braxton, Associate Director, Mining *LRB*

RE: Asphalt Ridge Mine, M/047/022 and M/047/032, Uintah County, Utah

I attended portions of the above home owners meeting in Vernal. Issues of interest to the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining are citizens' concerns regarding tar sands mining activities by Uintah County and Buena Ventura Resources Corporation (BVRC).

Tom Bachtell gave a brief presentation of BVRC's expansion plans, and discussed operational aspects of the proposed mine/asphalt extraction facility. Association home owners voiced a number of concerns, some of which are related to BVRC's operations, while others dealt with the Uintah County mining operation. These included:

1. Release of oily, dirty water from ditches within the mine site (possibly Uintah County's mine).
2. Mosquito proliferation in sediment ponds and other standing waters.
3. Water releases are affecting home owner septic tanks.
4. Blasting:
 - A. Mr. Bachtell offered to conduct a blasting survey prior to BVRC's new operations. This survey would provide baseline information on houses and home owner structures. Blasting by the county has resulted in damage awards to home owners.
 - B. Mr. Bachtell offered to commit to a blasting protocol that would include pre-blast warning signals and specificized hours for blasting operations. He would also require the county to follow any established protocol for county operations conducted on lands owned by BVRC. Home owners would help establish the protocol.
5. Noise
 - A. See blasting.
 - B. Truck loading/backup beepers. "Figure 8", could reduce some truck backing.
 - C. Operational noise to be reduced by berms.



6. Contamination.
 - A. Chemical spills.
 - B. Air pollution: operational dust and chemical emissions from processing.
7. Confidence in BVRC. Home owners not confident BVRC's offer to contract with Air Hills Village Home Owners Association to meet their concerns on noise, blasting, etc.
8. Bad feelings toward county over county's past responses to home owner concerns.

Recommendations:

DOGM should consider stipulating BVRC's plan to address some of the home owner's concerns. Blasting safety, blasting protocols, dust abatement by road watering, berm height are examples of possible stipulation items.

DOGM should require resubmission and stipulation Uintah County's plan so the two contiguous operations have identical performance measures.

DOGM management should meet with Uintah County officials and discuss the health safety concerns of the residents prior to introducing the need for plan stipulations.